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Letter dated 1 April 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you herewith a concept paper for the Security Council debate on post-conflict peacebuilding: comprehensive peacebuilding strategy to prevent the recurrence of conflict, to be held on 16 April 2010 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the letter dated 1 April 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note on post-conflict peacebuilding: comprehensive peacebuilding strategy to prevent the recurrence of conflict

Japan proposes to convene an open debate of the Security Council on 16 April 2010 to consider a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy to prevent the recurrence of conflict.

A. Context

1. Background

The international community has witnessed many countries in a post-conflict situation which relapsed into conflict again within a decade. One of the reasons is "peacebuilding gaps" between security and reconstruction. A seamless engagement is essential to fill such gaps, from emergency humanitarian relief, the political process, guarantee of security, to reconstruction and development.

Since 2001, the Council has organized thematic debates on peacebuilding-related issues.[1] The Peacebuilding Commission has actively engaged with four post-conflict countries on its agenda and its function will be reviewed this year. However, the challenge to peacebuilding is now one of the major threats to international peace and security and there are far greater demands for effective peacebuilding activities in the world than in those four countries. Peacebuilding strategies are often fragmented and ineffective for implementation.

It is of particular importance that the Security Council conduct a comprehensive policy review on an effective peacebuilding strategy at this juncture, taking advantage of the current momentum and drawing upon the experiences of relevant countries, with special reference to Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste.

2. What we debate

In order to prevent the recurrence of conflict, the main goals of peacebuilding, namely, political stability and security, must be achieved in parallel with social stability. In particular, political stability must be ensured through coexistence, reconciliation and reintegration of those affected by conflict, and security through security sector reform and the strengthening of governance and the rule of law. At the same time, social stability must be achieved through humanitarian assistance, the provision of basic services and infrastructure, economic opportunity and early delivery of a peace dividend.

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[1] A comprehensive approach to peacebuilding (S/PRST/2001/5); civilian aspects of peacebuilding (S/PRST/2004/33); justice and the rule of law including security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, small arms and other peacebuilding measures (S/PRST/2007/3, S/PRST/2004/34, S/PRST/2003/15); women and peace and security (S/PRST/2006/42, resolution 1889 (2009)); peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (S/PRST/2009/23); and transition and exit strategies (S/PRST/2010/2).

In this debate, the Council should consider what measures are required to achieve political stability, security and social stability from a comprehensive and integrated approach. More specifically, the Council could consider the following two questions:

- How should we achieve coherence and linkages in and among individual policy areas, in particular peace, security, development, human rights and the rule of law?
- How should we enhance the coordination among activities at the international, regional, national and local levels to achieve coherence of policies to support people on the ground?

B. Questions for discussion

1. Political stability and security

In order to advance peacebuilding, a country in a post-conflict situation first and foremost needs to exercise ownership in promoting the political process and maintaining security and governance. However, such countries are often confronted with difficulties, which require consideration of the following factors:

Conditions conducive to promoting the peace process

In some cases, ethnic or tribal strife and the isolation of ex-rebel groups continue even after the end of conflict, and this environment hinders the peace process.

- How can political conditions conducive to implementing peace process be created, and how can the international community support this effort? For example, discussion could focus on how to promote coexistence, reconciliation, and reintegration.
- How can civil-military cooperation be improved?

Smooth implementation of the peace process to prevent the recurrence of conflict

The peace process can be impeded when there is a lack of consistent political will on the part of the Government concerned, renewed political strife, and misuse of power by the Government. Political stability and security are often affected by external factors.

- How can a country prevent renewed political strife and manage a post-conflict situation? Discussion could focus on how to encourage continuous dialogue among parties and engagement by the United Nations and regional organizations.

Sustainable peace through elections

In many cases, an election is a key to establishing sustainable peace. However, the election process can sometimes face difficulties, which arise from the ineffective functioning of an independent election committee or voter registration process.

- What are the prerequisites for successful elections leading to a durable peace?

Security sector reform and the rule of law

In the post-conflict situation, there are often cases in which the military maintains a disproportionate size and is not under civilian control, and in which the police are unable to maintain security and impunity remains unaddressed.

- How should a security sector reform strategy be developed towards taking a more strategic, sector-wide approach in order to enhance the rule of law and governance?

Governance

In the post-conflict situation, many countries are confronted with a lack of capacity to provide basic security and address urgent issues.

- What should be the priority areas for institution-building and the training of nationals in order to advance governance, and how can transparency of governance be ensured? Possible areas for discussion include democratic systems, including independent media, and human rights issues.

2. Promotion of social stability

In order to make the peacebuilding process irreversible and prevent the recurrence of conflict, a country must ensure social stability in parallel with peace and security. However, countries are often confronted with difficulties, requiring consideration of the following factors:

Delivery of a peace dividend

Social stability is difficult to achieve because of poverty, unemployment, social inequality and regional disparity.

- How can the early delivery of basic needs such as housing, food, water, electricity, health care and education be achieved through a human-centred approach?

Linkages among political stability, security and development

Measures towards political stability and security such as security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration will not succeed unless they are accompanied by measures to facilitate reintegration through income creation and youth employment.

- How can security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration be facilitated by promoting the reintegration of ex-combatants supported by development policy?

- How can relevant actors be encouraged to accelerate the restoration of the community and local economy, including through the protection and empowerment of women and vulnerable people such as refugees and internally displaced persons and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives?

Transnational issues

Transnational issues such as drug trafficking, organized crime, terrorism and small arms affect stability across borders and threaten international peace and security.

- How can cross-border cooperation be promoted to address transnational issues?
- How can a subregional, regional or international strategy be effectively implemented?

3. Strengthening international cooperation

In order to achieve recovery and reconstruction and to prevent the recurrence of conflict, international cooperation based on long-term commitment and partnership is essential, fully respecting the ownership of the Government. The United Nations is expected to play a central role in mobilizing and coordinating international support and assistance. The global peacebuilding challenges are by far bigger and more complicated than those on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Which aspects of international cooperation should be strengthened for mobilizing support and resources? Possible answers include:

- Sustained and coordinated financial support (bilateral contributions, the Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, regional development banks, the private sector)
- Experienced personnel, including the pooling of civilian expertise, capacity-building and training for personnel at the regional level
- Partnerships for continuous support.